

PSYCHIATRY

Poison Acting in Cells May Cause Schizophrenia

Discoverer of Insulin Shock Treatment Says Toxin
May Act Directly or Indirectly Through Midbrain

URGING early treatment of psychic illness, to avoid institutional care and severity of the convulsive shock treatment he himself introduced to medical science, Dr. Manfred Sakel, Viennese psychiatrist, told the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease his theory as to how the brain becomes disordered.

The cause of schizophrenia, serious malady of split personality which he treats by shock, is still unknown, Dr. Sakel reported. But he believes it may be attributed to some poison acting in cells of the higher brain centers. The poison may attack either directly, or else indirectly, by disturbing the control apparatus in the midbrain where primitive and automatic functions of the brain reside.

In early stages the affected brain cells are merely disfunctioning when the human being shows signs of unbalance, but if the condition becomes deeply rooted, then damage sets in, he explained.

Asthma Psychological

STUDY of one hundred cases of asthma which offer evidence that this disease has an emotional origin in childhood was reported by Dr. Felix Deutsch, who has been engaged in research for three years at Harvard and at Boston hospitals. Not ignoring allergic features of asthma attacks, Dr. Deutsch is convinced that this disease must be treated

psychologically when it does not respond to medical care only.

Asthma is one of several diseases he cited in which body and mind appear inextricably involved. His explanation is that childish tantrums, rebellion against over aggressive maternalism or other conflicts may become linked with conditions in the respiratory tract or some other organ and later in life the physical attack of disease may be evoked when an outer stimulus stirs up the old emotional state.

Marihuana Gives Some a Jag

EVIDENCE that marihuana, drug taken in cigarette form, affects people differently, leading some into a jag state of pleasure and others into an excited fright which may end in insanity, is reported by Dr. Walter Bromberg, physician in charge of the psychiatric clinic at the Court of General Sessions of New York.

Thirty-two cases of mental disease traceable to marihuana were described by Dr. Bromberg, speaking before the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease. The drug, he said, does not lead to any one particular type of mental illness. Rather, its effects tend to push certain users toward whatever unbalance of mind or emotions their own make-up is liable.

Citing ways in which the drug affects mind and body, Dr. Bromberg told of users being confused, deluded into a feeling of their tremendous brilliance, lost

in time so that minutes seem hours, believing their hands and feet have become huge, and that a small downward step is a great plunge. The majority become exhilarated and may laugh uncontrollably. A smaller percentage go into the more dangerous frightened state.

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POPULATION

More Childless Marriages; Fewer Large Families

ONLY three out of every eight families in the United States today are contributing to America's population growth by having three or more children, P. K. Whelpton of the Central Statistical Board, a Federal agency charged with correlating government statistical studies, and Nellie E. Jackson, of the Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems, informed the American Statistical Association.

Childless marriages have increased to one out of every five marriages, they declared on the basis of birth rate studies.

Marriages resulting in five or more births are outnumbered four to one by all other marriages, but they contribute more than three-fourths of all our population growth.

The proportion of childless marriages has been increasing, their studies show. It was almost twice as high, according to birth rates for 1929-31 as it was ten years previously. In addition the proportion of married couples who could have four, five, six or other large number of births declined by between 25 and 40 per cent. during the same period.

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